

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. – 11. (Cancelled)

12. (New) An operating and display unit for switching devices in a motor vehicle comprising:

at least one operating element;

a symbol display field associated with each of said at least one operating element wherein the symbol display field is arranged in a fixed manner at a geometrically determined point in relation to said at least one operating element for displaying a symbol which is assigned to a device to be switched, wherein said symbol display field is embodied using black panel technology.

13. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein the symbol display field is backlit by at least one of search lighting and functional lighting.

14. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein the symbol display field has a uniformly dark appearance in a state when there is no backlighting.

15. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein at least one symbol of the symbol display field can be recognized or is displayed even in the state when there is no backlighting.

16. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein a plurality of symbols can be displayed simultaneously or successively in the symbol display field.

17. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein each of the at least one operating element is embodied without symbols.

18. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein the symbols are each displayed at a point which is the same geometrically or at points which are arranged offset with respect to each another within the symbol display field.

19. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein the at least one operating element is formed by a pushbutton key which is provided with a structure for improving the haptics.

20. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 19, wherein a projected touch face of the pushbutton key is at least a quarter smaller than a projected face of the symbol display field.

21. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, wherein each operating element is assigned a symbol display field the symbol display fields being arranged in series and the transition between symbol display fields which are arranged adjacent to one another is virtually invisible to the user due to an effect of the black panel.

22. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 12, further comprising a switch-over device for optionally allocating to the at least one operating element a function which is assigned to a specific device, the function being selectable from a number of functions of a plurality of devices, wherein the symbol which is assigned to the function which is determined by the selection of the allocation of the operating element is displayed in the symbol display field.

23. (New) The operating and display unit is claimed in claim 19, wherein said pushbutton key is a rocker key.

24. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 20, wherein said projected touch face is more than one half smaller than the projected face of the symbol display field.

25. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 13, wherein the symbol display field has a uniformly dark appearance in a state when there is no backlighting.

26. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 13, wherein at least one symbol of the symbol display field can be recognized or is displayed even in the state when there is no backlighting.

27. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 13, wherein a plurality of symbols can be displayed simultaneously or successively in the symbol display field.

28. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 14, wherein a plurality of symbols can be displayed simultaneously or successively in the symbol display field.

29. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 15, wherein a plurality of symbols can be displayed simultaneously or successively in the symbol display field.

30. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 13, wherein each of the at least one operating element is embodied without symbols.

31. (New) The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 14, wherein each of the at least one operating element is embodied without symbols.